

VZCZCXRO7124
OO RUEHDE RUEHDIR
DE RUEHKU #4665 3511312
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 171312Z DEC 06
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7908
INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

UNCLAS KUWAIT 004665

SIPDIS

SIPDIS
SENSITIVE

STATE FOR NEA/ARP

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [KPAO](#) [KU](#) [NATIONAL ASSEMBLY](#)
SUBJECT: FEELING THE HEAT, INFORMATION MINISTER RESIGNS

REF: A. KUWAIT 4612
[1](#)B. KUWAIT 2442
[1](#)C. KUWAIT 2193
[1](#)D. 05 KUWAIT 1406
[1](#)E. 05 KUWAIT 484

[1](#)1. (SBU) According to local media, Minister of Information Mohammed Al-Sanousi has submitted his resignation rather than subject himself to an intense parliamentary questioning session, commonly referred to in Kuwait as a "grilling," which was scheduled to take place on December 18. The grilling would have been the first since that of Health Minister Dr. Mohammed Al-Jarallah in April 2005, which forced him to resign (ref D), and the 35th in Kuwait's parliamentary history. Bader Nasser Al-Humaidi, the Minister of Housing and Public Works, has reportedly been appointed as Acting Minister of Information in addition to his current position.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Al-Sanousi, a liberal businessman with prior media experience (ref C), had drawn criticism from all corners of Parliament over alleged abuse of his position to enhance his business interests, shutting down several private, politically-oriented satellite TV channels during Kuwait's election campaign in June (ref B), and permitting the broadcast of "inappropriate" television programs during Ramadan. The lead up to the grilling received considerable attention in the local press over the past six weeks. While Al-Sanousi had stated publicly his determination to face the grilling and remain in office, media observers commented privately that the grilling would have negatively affected his business interests and predicted Al-Sanousi would resign in order to protect those interests.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Many contacts have predicted that if Al-Sanousi resigned, the Prime Minister would take the opportunity to introduce further Cabinet changes (ref A). Tensions between the Government and Parliament have grown in recent months in part due to opposition parliamentarians' insistence on grilling Al-Sanousi. Replacing other controversial ministers would be seen as a conciliatory measure, but would not completely alleviate tensions given some parliamentarians' insistence on writing off Kuwaiti citizens' consumer loans, something the Government strongly opposes. Opposition parliamentarians, who represent a majority in Parliament, have also threatened to grill other ministers, suggesting Al-Sanousi's resignation may merely postpone a clash between Parliament and the Government.

For more reporting from Embassy Kuwait, visit:
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/kuwait/?cable s>

Visit Kuwait's Classified Website:
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/kuwait/>
